

Background Music:  
National Socialist Propaganda and the Reinforcement of German  
Virtue

by

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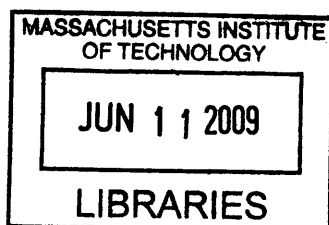
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## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the implementation of official propaganda issued by the National Socialist regime during the years following Adolf Hitler's rise to power in 1933 up through 1945. By analyzing two very different mediums of propaganda used by the National Socialist party, film and advertising in a middle-class German periodical, I compare subtle and overt propaganda methods, as well as the differing approaches the Reich Ministry for Propaganda took when targeting varying audiences.

My first chapter is an in depth analysis of the German Film industry under the Third Reich. I looked at three Nazi propaganda films: *Triumph des Willens* (1934), a film created in order to establish Hitler's role as the leader of the Third Reich, *der ewige Jude* (1940), a crude, documentary style, anti-Semitic film, and *Jud Süß* (1940), a feature length entertainment film. A comparison of the content of these films and their respective box office results point out the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches to propaganda films.

In my second chapter I explore women's advertisements in the popular German periodical *die Gartenlaube*. By looking at the evolving depiction of women in advertisements for products such as *Nivea-Creme* and *Nur Blond* (a women's hair product), and the imagery of women on the covers of the magazine, I attempt to show the ways in which the National Socialist party attempted to connect the standards of beauty to political and ideological goals, thereby redefining them.

The political and ideological propaganda of the party was the "background music" to everyday life, regardless of whether its German viewers were political supporters of the Nazi Party. I argue that the goal of the Reich Ministry for Propaganda and Public Enlightenment was never to transform or mold the minds of the masses, but to reiterate and reinforce pervasive beliefs and to encourage passive acceptance of, or even just minimize opposition to, Nazi ideology and legislation.

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*Dedication:*  
*To my mother, Virginia and Father, Thomas.*  
*Thank you so much for your support,*  
*I am truly blessed by you.*

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## Introduction

The goal of modern propaganda is no longer to transform opinion but to arouse an active and mythical belief. –Jacques Ellul<sup>1</sup>

It is December 15<sup>th</sup>, 1939. More than two thousand people from all over Atlanta, Georgia and some who have traveled across the country for the occasion, fill the streets outside of Loew's Grand Theater, at the corner of Peachtree and Forsyth in downtown Atlanta. Searchlights illuminate the night air and direct people toward the excitement. On Peachtree Street the crowds are five to six people deep all the way to the Georgian Terrace Hotel and, as you get closer to the Hotel, the crowd is still more dense, 15 to 20 people deep. People shout from windows and rooftops as the stars approach. Colored confetti and streamers fill the air.<sup>2</sup> The Stars and Bars flutter in every window and above every street.<sup>3</sup>

The night described above was the 1939 world Premiere of the Academy Awards Best Picture of the year, "Gone with the Wind." "Gone with the Wind" exceeded all box office records to date, grossing approximately \$5 million in its first month, averaging nearly \$1 million a week in the month of January alone.<sup>4</sup> "Gone with the Wind" was undoubtedly an economic and cultural success.

Across the Atlantic Ocean, nine months later, the German government was about to release its own cultural film. Universum Film AG (UFA), the domineering film studio

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<sup>1</sup> Jacques Ellul, *Propaganda: The formation of Mens Attitudes*, 1965.

<sup>2</sup> Meyer Berger, "Atlanta Retaken By Glory of the Past," *The New York Times*, 12/15/39.

<sup>3</sup> Meyer Berger, "Atlanta is Won by Film of the South," *The New York Times*, 12/16/39.

<sup>4</sup> Donald Crafton, et al., *History of the American Cinema: The Talkies: U.S. Cinema's Transitions to Sound, 1926-1931*, 1997, 11.

in Germany under Nazi leadership, <sup>5</sup>lunched the film “Jud Süß” on September 24, 1940.<sup>5</sup> The film was a tremendous success both in Germany and in countries occupied by Germany.<sup>6</sup> These two films, although significantly different in content, have similar strengths as dramatic films. Each of them is based upon a novel that represents an idealized, or mythical attitude about a past event or culture that shaped the ideology of the viewer’s ancestors. In the case of “Gone with the Wind,” this event was the Civil War, which greatly influenced the way southerners in the United States lived. The film showed their loyalty to their land and families and it also gave an interesting snapshot of the relationship between black slaves and whites. MGM, the company that produced the film, was privately owned, and in the United States artists had the freedom of speech.

“Jud Süß” was also based on a semi-fictional novel written in 1827, but bares no relation to the original story.<sup>7</sup> It also addresses the question of race. The culture that the film captures and reveals is the anti-Semitic culture that had once existed in Germany. It was produced by UFA, which in 1940 was under the director control of the propaganda ministry of the Nazi party, and there were laws in place in Germany that mandated censorship.

The films both mixed elements of history with drama. One of the differences between the films is that “Gone with the Wind” is considered to be one of the best films of all time. It is thought of as a cultural icon, whereas “Jud Süß” is seen, first and foremost, as one of the crowning accomplishments of National Socialist propaganda.

What is the fundamental difference between a propaganda film and a landmark

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<sup>5</sup> Ernst Seidl, *Jud Süß: Propagandafilm im NS-Statt: Katalog zur ausstellung im Haus der geschichte Stuttgart von 14. Dezember 2007 bis 3. August 2008*, 2007, 57-59.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 60-62.

<sup>7</sup> Jeffrey Richards, *Visions of yesterday*, 1973, 340.

film in entertainment? This is a very fine line, which this paper will not discuss in great detail. But some factors that seem to matter are whether the film is the product of a private company or of the state, and also how free people in the society are to express their ideas. An entertainment film can have a powerful effect and can propagate a myth of an attitude about a group of people; but entertainment films aim to deliberately reinforce ideological ideals and manipulate art as a means to some end.

People really believed that the old south was that the way that it was depicted in Margaret Mitchell's novel, and in the movie "Gone with the Wind;" just prior to Margaret Mitchell's novel in 1937, white America was beginning to develop a spirit of sectional reconciliation and began creating a romantic version of the old south. In 1918 Ulrich B. Phillips portrayed slavery as a benign institution, in which the slaves were child-like and content and most of them were lazy, and needed looking after.<sup>8</sup> This is the way that slaves are portrayed in "Gone with the Wind." The black characters in the film, Mammy, Pork, Prissy, and Big Sam exhibit stereotypical traits of African-Americans and add comic relief to the film.<sup>9</sup>

"Gone with the Wind" portrayed the slaves as second-class citizens, but they were citizens' none-the-less, who needed to be looked after and taken care of. Conversely, the purpose of the Nazi film "Jud Süß" was to motivate hatred, and a belief that the Jews

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<sup>8</sup> Ulrich B. Phillips, *American Negro Slavery*, 1918.

<sup>9</sup> Gary W. Gallagher, *Causes won, lost and forgotten: How Hollywood and popular art shape what we know about the civil war*, 2008, 50-51. It was not until the 1940s that this attitude begins to be challenged. One of the first people to challenge Phillips was Kenneth M. Stamp and then in 1959, in the wake of World War Two, Stanley Elkins challenged the institution of slavery. Kenneth M. Stamp, *The Peculiar Institution*, 1964; Elkins compared the American system of slavery to Nazi concentration camps. He talked about the terrible psychological damage that slavery inflicted upon blacks in America, just the holocaust had done to the Jews in Germany and Poland; Stanley Elkins, *Slavery*, 1976.

didn't belong, that they created an impurity within the race. Propaganda disseminates political and social ideology, and its pay-off is not merely in money but rather in Newton's First Law of mechanics: inertia.

Every body persists in its state of being at rest or of moving uniformly straightforward, except insofar as it is compelled to change its state by force impressed.<sup>10</sup>

The more massive the movement, the more likely it is that the propaganda will be able to gather momentum and begin to roll forward. Propaganda is only as good as its following, but once people begin to believe in the ideals being promoted in the propaganda, it is difficult to stop that forward motion and more people will, inevitably, become caught up in the movement before there is a force large enough to oppose or stop it.

What factors need to be taken into consideration when building a propaganda machine? Is it the audience that matters: the number of people, or the kind of people? Is it the medium: film as opposed to news, radio, speech, or posters? Perhaps it is the sphere in which the propaganda is presented that matters: public or private. There is also the question of what type of propaganda is more effective: subtle or overt. The NSDAP (*Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*, or National Socialist German Workers Party) risked nothing by considering each of these factors and orchestrating them into what would become the "background music" of everyday life under the Third Reich.

As early as 1925, after the reestablishment of the National Socialist party in Germany, Adolf Hitler realized that each of these factors were important to a political campaign and had the potential to influence the strength of the party. This is why, when he came to power in 1933, he immediately began work on the new Propaganda Ministry

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<sup>10</sup> Isaac Newton, *The Principia*, A new translation by I.B. Cohen and A. Whitman, 1999.



and in doing so he set out to control every aspect of German society in an attempt to create the most powerful propaganda apparatus that the world had ever seen. In addition to the monopoly that the NSDAP held over the film industry, they were the dominant voice in the news, on the radio, and in the pamphlets and posters on the streets and storefronts. Their propaganda even infiltrated the home, in weekly magazines and children's games.<sup>11</sup>

The Nazi party made it abundantly clear from the moment they took power in 1933, that National Socialist Germany would be governed in part by the propaganda ministry. In his speech, given at 1934 Nuremburg Party Rally, propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels reiterated that Germany had not lost World War One on the battlefield but rather, that they lost the war of propaganda which led to the collapse of morale on the domestic front.

While the enemy states produced unprecedented atrocity propaganda aimed at Germany throughout the whole world, we did nothing and were completely defenseless against it. Only when enemy foreign propaganda had nearly won over the greater part even of the neutral states did the German government begin to sense the enormous power of propaganda. It was too late. Just as we were militarily and economically unprepared for the war, so too, with propaganda. We lost the war in this area more than in any other.<sup>12</sup>

The National Socialist party was determined never to lose that battle again.

This paper will look at the ways in which the NSDAP was able to use film and women's advertisements, in both subtle and overt ways, to promote their ideals to two very different audiences. What made a German advertisement for a women's hair product called *Nur Blond* (only blonde) distinct from an advertisement for an American

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<sup>11</sup> One such game was the infamous "Juden Raus!" (Out with the Jews!) , which was modeled off of monopoly. Claudia Koonz, *The Nazi Conscience*, 2003, 149-150.

<sup>12</sup> Randall L. Bytwerk, *Landmark Speeches of National Socialism*, 2008, 42.

product called *Blondex*, which served the same purpose? The National Socialists used these subtle avenues of propaganda, not to transform the attitudes of men and women, or to mold their minds, but to encourage them to passively accept the Nazi ideology and governance, especially with regard to the “Jewish Question.”<sup>13</sup> The more overt forms of propaganda, which can certainly be found in speeches, educational curricula, and often films, were directed toward the party members and dedicated followers. In the 1933 Reichstag election, less than half of the German population voted in support of the Nazi party,<sup>14</sup> which meant there was a large population of Germans who were still not accepting of the National Socialist ideals. These were the people who needed to be reached in order to minimize civilian resistance.

Regardless of whether or not everyday Germans supported the political or social ambitions of the National Socialist party, propaganda, infused with National Socialist ideals, became the “background music” to their lives. It was with them as they walked down the street, on pamphlets and billboards. It was with them in the workplace when their Jewish colleagues were all forced to retire. It was with them at the cinema, as they watched the feature-film of the week. It was with them at home when they read a magazine, listened to the news, or discussed what their children learned in school that day. It was omnipresent, but what made it most dangerous was that it was only *background* music, not an actual opus. It made people believe that they could choose to tune it out if they wanted to, making those people more susceptible to the subtle propaganda used to activate latent anti-Semitism, or to define the standards of beauty by

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<sup>13</sup> Randall L. Bytwerk, *Landmark Speeches of National Socialism*, 2008, 69.

<sup>14</sup> Nicholas Reeves, *The Power of Propaganda: Myth or Reality*, 1999, 88

Nazi values. The very fact that the party kept its propaganda as steady, low-key hum in the background, made it all the more insidious and successful and ultimately dangerous.

## Is Seeing, Believing?

Film propaganda in the Third Reich, the ambitions of people involved, and the psychological, social, and political impact of such propaganda are topics essential to understanding the extent of National Socialist cultural politics and the development of propaganda itself as a social tool. Despite this, many see film propaganda as decorative and difficult to evaluate. The historian, David Welch, for instance, explains that the effects of the films released by the Propaganda Ministry of the Nazi Regime are difficult to quantify, especially in a totalitarian state where public opinion mattered very little. Welch argues that Nazi ideology was a product of the *Völkisch* (nationalist) thinking that arose from late eighteenth century romanticism, and that Nazi cinema was part of an all out cultural and ideological offensive against the German people.<sup>15</sup> Nicholas Reeves, on the other hand, attempts to investigate the "myth" of the efficacy of German film propaganda; Reeves concludes that by coordinating the German Film Industry, the architects of propaganda, including as Joseph Goebbels, may have set out to transform the ideology of each German civilian, but, he argues, ultimately failed: "attitudes towards the regime were always determined above all else by what the regime was doing. For all of its considerable skill, Nazi film propaganda was only truly successful when it was giving its audience a message that it wanted to hear."<sup>16</sup>

Were the efforts of the Propaganda Ministry during the Third Reich sufficient to transform German society and politicize everyday culture? The answer seems to depend upon what you emphasize: Welch, for instance, focuses on the production of propaganda—especially on the tremendous coordination of the German Film industry—

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<sup>15</sup> David Welch, *Propaganda and the German Cinema; 1933-1945*, 1983, 1-5.

<sup>16</sup> Nicholas Reeves, *The Power of Propaganda: Myth or Reality*, 1999, 129.

and ultimately sees that film propaganda was successful. Reeves, on the other hand, focuses on the film viewers, arguing that film did not do anything to transform the minds of the dissenters within the German community. If it had been successful, he argues, then there would have been no reason to hide the plans for the final solution from the people of Germany.<sup>17</sup> To address this crucial question of efficacy, it is necessary to investigate the issue from different directions. The people involved in the propaganda campaign, the coordination of the German Film industry, the films themselves, and the psychological effects these films had are all topics that need to be studied in an effort to understand Nazi Propaganda.

This chapter looks at the ways in which the impact of National Socialist film propaganda depended upon the theme of the film. Anti-Semitic film propaganda, for instance, reinforced, rather than transformed, the way Germans felt about the Jews. Yet film propaganda played a significant role in creating the myth of the Führer, and in reestablishing the pride that Germans felt toward their country after the humiliating loss of World War one. National socialist Film propaganda also attempted to raise the morale of the nation, as World War Two became a total war, especially after the tremendous loss the Axis suffered at the Battle of Stalingrad in 1943.

Film, unlike other potential propaganda mediums, has a unique character in its visual presentations. By exhibiting true-to-life situations, incorporating real people, and creating characters that an audience can relate to, films have the ability to elicit emotions like no other medium can. A good film can make a person cry, or laugh, or hate. It can create fear, intimidation, or inspiration. Other propaganda mediums such as posters,

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<sup>17</sup> Nicholas Reeves, *The Power of Propaganda: Myth or Reality*, 1999, 119.

newsreels, speeches, and rallies also have a strong visual component; but they do not usually incorporate this emotional relationship to the characters that film does. These other types of visual propaganda are often more common, however, they do not require the same amount of investment as it takes to make a film—or the same time commitment on the part of the viewer to go see it.

Film is a risky medium. It costs millions of dollars to produce a quality film. Its success depends on its audience, and therefore it must be appealing to the populace if it is to make a profit. Anyone can read billboards, and posters, or watch the news, but to see a film a person must commit to both an emotional and a financial investment at the door of the cinema. If there is no draw to the film emotionally, then there is no reason to invest between 0.60 and 1.5 Reich Marks to see it.<sup>18</sup> Each individual chooses whether or not they will see a film based on what they expect to get out of it. Therefore, to be "successful" and reach the largest audience possible, producers of propaganda films, from directors all the way up to the propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels himself, had to keep the demands of film—and of film audiences—at the foremost of their concerns.

Film is able, to associate an image with a negative characteristic in both overt and subtle ways. With Nazi anti-Semitism, the visual association could be stark—such as by associating "the Jew" with traits like dishonesty, cowardice, greed, violence, or filth by means of plot or symbolism or both. Yet after seeing such a film, one was not expected to go into the streets smashing all of the Jewish store windows. Rather, its impact might be more subtle: viewers might feel more at ease about the passing of anti-Semitic

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<sup>18</sup> This was the average price of a ticket to the cinema in the mid 1920s, although it could be as high as RM 6 depending on which theater you went to. Corey Ross, *Media and the Making of Modern Germany: Mass Communications Society, and Politics from the Empire to the Third Reich*, 2008, 126.

legislation, for instance. Subtle film propaganda was a helpful tool for the stirring of exactly this latent anti-Semitism; the propaganda would encourage people to react to the Jewish stereotype, as defined by the Nazi party, even if they did not consider themselves anti-Semitic.

Such subtle effects could be amplified by being produced and distributed on a larger scale. On March 14, 1933, President Hindenburg appointed Joseph Goebbels as the head of the Reich Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda (RMVP), which had been established the day before.<sup>19</sup> For his part, Goebbels was one of the original associates of Hitler, joining the NSDAP in 1924. After 1933, he used his government position to relentlessly promote Nazi ideology through print media, radio, newsreels, and, perhaps the area that he commanded the most control in, the German Film industry.

As propaganda minister, Goebbels understood good propaganda to be “the background music” to government policy.<sup>20</sup> He valued the art of propaganda, and the subtle ways in which information was distributed, and conveyed. In his speech at the Nuremberg Rally in 1934 he stressed that propaganda should uphold what was true, above all other virtues, and should be infused with educational information. Propaganda, a newly discovered political weapon that only became prominent during the First World War, was optimized under the direction of Joseph Goebbels.<sup>21</sup> He created a superbly refined propaganda machine with the distributing power, the coordination, and the artistry necessary to accomplish the immense task of mobilizing the German population.

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<sup>19</sup> Ralph Georg Reuth, *Goebbels*, 1993, 172. Reuth’s book on the life of Joseph Goebbels, tries to get at who this man really was. He argues that Goebbels’ objective was to, in Reuth’s own words, mentally mobilize the people of Germany, not to “mold” their minds to fit Nazi ideals.

<sup>20</sup> Randall L. Bytwerk, *Landmark Speeches of National Socialism*, 2008, 42.

<sup>21</sup> Terence Qualter, *Propaganda and Psychological Warfare*, 1962, 4.

The task of National Socialist popular mobilization was nowhere so evident as in propagandistic films such as Leni Reifenstahl's *Triumph of the Will*. From the clouds people can be seen running out of their homes and stores as the Führer's plane approaches. Thousands of people have gathered and a parade has begun. People line every street, two or three people deep and the Storm-Troopers monitor the crowd.

As early as 1934, when *Triumph of the Will* was made, the German film industry overall had already begun to be subject to a system of approval that the NSDAP controlled.<sup>22</sup> The term Gleichschaltung, or "co-ordination," was used to describe the bringing into line of all aspects of the German society, economy, and individual.<sup>23</sup> This control was the necessary first step toward a successful propaganda program. Because of the importance of film as a propaganda medium, all German Cinema industries during Gleichschaltung came under the Reichsfilmkammer (RFK), or the Film Chamber of the Reich. The Film Chamber, in fact, came out of one of Hitler's first declarations as Chancellor in 1933:

In relation to the political decontamination of our public life, the government will embark upon a systematic campaign to restore the nation's moral and material health. The whole educational system, theatre, film, literature, the press and broadcasting—all these will be used as a means to end this. They will be harnessed to help preserve the eternal values, which are part of the integral nature of our people.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> *Triumph of the Will* was a highly propagandistic Film released in 1935, that served as a large source of revenue and a way to disseminate National Socialist ideology. Nicholas Reeves, *The Power of Propaganda: Myth or Reality*, 1999, 97.

<sup>23</sup> Ralph Georg Reuth, *Goebbels*, 1993, 175.

<sup>24</sup> David Welch, *The Third Reich; Politics and Propaganda*, 2002, 22.



As a result of this declaration, the *Spitzenorganisation der Deutschen Filmindustrie* (SPIO), or the large film industries in Germany, absorbed the Cinema Owners Association, which was comprised of small cinema owners.

Under the New Reich Cinema Law of February 16, 1934 the coordination of the German cinema industry included compulsory script censorship, the right to ban a film, and the right of the Reich film director to oversee all stages of production.<sup>25</sup> It also went so far as to exclude all Jews from cultural life, at least in areas such as film production. The scale of the Ministry's direct involvement in the production of German film meant that all film that was viewed by the people of Germany was first censored, scrutinized, written, and rewritten, edited, and produced to convey those things the National Socialist party officially believed and valued the most. Beginning in 1934, a German could not go to the movies without being subjected to official National Socialist ideology in some form. Whether it was a feature length fictional film, or a documentary one could expect a number of everpresent themes: anti-Semitism; glorification of Nazi leaders; and justification of war and eugenics.

By 1936 the large film industries, *Universium Film AG* (UFA) and *Tobis* accounted for no less than sixty percent of total German film production.<sup>26</sup> The Film Chamber of the Reich was an excellent example of the tremendous amounts of power Goebbels provided himself with through this act of coordination. The RFK was one of seven chambers within the Reich Culture Chamber, all of which fell under the control of

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<sup>25</sup> Roel Vane Winkel and David Welch, *Cinema and the Swastika; The international Expansion of Third Reich Cinema*, 2007, 10.

<sup>26</sup> Nicholas Reeves, *The Power of Propaganda: Myth or Reality*, 1999, 95-96.

the ministry, and therefore had the potential for coordinated propaganda campaigns.<sup>27</sup>

With the entire German film industry under his watchful eyes, Goebbels was then able to set the standards of approval for the creation of films under the Nazi Regime.

One of the most difficult and immediate tasks of the Propaganda Ministry was to “lead the people not merely to accept Hitler’s leadership, but rather to develop passionate adulation and uncritical obedience, to worship their one true savior.”<sup>28</sup> In the 1932 Reichstag election, the last election before Hitler’s rise to power, the National Socialist Party won only 37% of the vote. In 1933 the party did only marginally better, receiving 43.9% of the vote.<sup>29</sup> For National Socialism to be successful the party needed the support of the German people. Therefore it was the Propaganda Ministry's objective to glorify the Führer and all he embodied as part of its propaganda campaign to gain a substantial following of people who had faith in the actions of the Nazi party leaders. As the cinema became more popular, and attendance went up, film became a more and more efficient way to reach a large audience. Capitalizing on this growing popularity was an absolutely necessary stepping-stone toward the continued success in mobilizing faithful followers and in muting opposition toward the NSDAP. As Rudolph Hess put it succinctly at the end of the 1934 Nuremburg Party Rally, “The Party is Hitler. But Hitler is Germany, just as Germany is Hitler,” which was not only descriptive of Nazi propaganda but became propaganda itself, as it was used by film director Leni Riefenstahl one year later in a propaganda film.

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<sup>27</sup> Roel Vane Winkel and David Welch, *Cinema and the Swastika; The international Expansion of Third Reich Cinema*, 2007, 9.

<sup>28</sup> Nicholas Reeves, *The Power of Propaganda: Myth or Reality*, 1999, 88.

<sup>29</sup> Wolfgang Benz, *A Concise History of the Third Reich*, 2006, 309.

Riefenstahl's film of 1935, *Triumph des Willens* (Triumph of the Will), is one of the most well known, and most controversial, films of all time. The film was written, produced, and directed by Leni Riefenstahl, a friend to both Goebbels and Hitler himself. The film is known for its innovations in film technique and beautiful aesthetics, and, conversely, for its glorification of the Führer's leadership. The film opens in the clouds, looking down on the old city of Nuremberg. The camera follows Hitler's plane, which is shadowed onto the crowds seen assembling below. In the city the symbol of the Nazi party, and its leadership is everywhere: on flags, banners, armbands, and pamphlets. This imagery illustrates one of the most poignant themes present throughout the film: Hitler as a representation of all that is divine. Riefenstahl used film to strengthen the *myth of the Führer*, by presenting Hitler as Godlike, as an angel who ascended from the heavens to be with the people of Nuremberg in difficult times.<sup>30</sup>

Another theme that is evident through out the film is the importance of and reliance upon military power. The Swastika flies everywhere, there are SS and SA men holding the people back from the street as Hitler approaches. The Storm Troopers also intimidated: they made clear to any would-be dissenters that the Nazi party had an enormous, regimented army behind it.<sup>31</sup> Yet in the film, the SS and SA are not brawling communists or socialists or harassing Jews; they are peaceably assembled. Such a visual narrative was a way of bringing viewers closer to Hitler, to make them see that his cause was right and just, and to make his actions more acceptable, and at the same time it served to intimidate, and to make clear that the NSDAP wasn't going anywhere.

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<sup>30</sup> Michael Burleigh argues that Nazism played the role of a secular religion. Michael Burleigh, *The Third Reich: A New History*, 2001.

<sup>31</sup> Leni Riefenstahl, *Triumph des Willens*, 1935.

*Triumph des Willens*, the most financially successful film depicting the relationship between the leader and his people, was produced against Goebbels' wishes, which repeatedly insisted on more subtle methods of film propaganda. The film opened on March 29<sup>th</sup>, 1935 for an audience of honored guests.<sup>32</sup> The program that accompanied the film provided instruction for how the RMVP wanted its audience to worship Hitler.

...Like a fantastic eagle, an aeroplane glides through the air. Spreading its wings wide, it plunges forward, its propellers grinding themselves howling into the wind. It is the aeroplane that carries the Führer towards the city, in which the great, proud, heart-stirring spectacle of a new Germany will be consummated...thundering, it circles over the city. An aeroplane. *The aeroplane!* The Führer is arriving.<sup>33</sup>

However, at a time when the National Socialist Party was just beginning to consolidate political strength and remained concerned about international relations, *Triumph of the Will* did not make a good impression throughout the world. When American actor Charlie Chaplin saw a part of the film he fell out of his seat laughing.<sup>34</sup> Nonetheless, although the film was unpopular in countries like The United States and Great Britain, it was quite successful in Germany. Its representations of national unity and its establishment of the goals set forth by the NSDAP were successful in creating the myth of the Führer. Within two months of opening, *Triumph of the Will* had earned over 815,000 Reich Marks, and UFA considered it one of the three most lucrative films of the year.<sup>35</sup> The fact that the Nazi party was met with minimal resistance suggests that Germans were either successfully intimidated by the Nazi party, or that enough people were satisfied with the explanation or justification of the party's actions as provided to

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<sup>32</sup> David Welch, *Propaganda and the German Cinema; 1933-1945*, 1983, 148.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, 149-50. *Illustrierter Film-Kurier*, Quoted in Welch.

<sup>34</sup> R. E. Ringer, *Excel HSC Modern History*, 2006, 197.

<sup>35</sup> Kenneth Poferl, *Her Propaganda Marches On; A detailed comparison between Sieg des Glaubens and Triumph of the Will*, 2003.

them in part through propaganda to make a personal decision to go along with the plan presented.

Alongside documentary style and overtly propagandistic films, the NSDAP produced many entertainment films. Between the years 1936 and 1939 the The RFG released several *Sherlock Holmes* films (1936, 1937), *Robert and Bertram* (1939) as well as propagandistic films on the euthanasia program (*Erbkrank*, 1936) the role of the family in the Third Reich (*Mutterliebe*, 1939). There was a balance between overt political propaganda and films for entertainment during the NSDAP's years in power. It was important to keep a balance in order to keep people attending the cinema, "even entertainment is nowadays politically important, if not even decisive for the outcome of the war."<sup>36</sup>

1940 was a significant year in the Third Reich. The nation was at war. After the humiliations of the loss of the First World War, and the widely-hated strictures of the Versailles Treaty, first the diplomatic and then the early military success for the Germans abroad helped to expand confidence in the new National Socialist leaders, particularly in Adolph Hitler.<sup>37</sup> Film propaganda was one tool that the party used on the domestic front in order to consolidate these gains in popular support, and even expand them for the war abroad. But in 1940, film propaganda also was a tool for the intensification of the "civil war" that the Nazi's were waging: the war against Germany's Jews.

The feature length presentation *Jud Süß* was an anti-Semitic film, produced in 1940 and was directed by Veit Harlan, one of the most popular directors of the day.<sup>38</sup> The

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<sup>36</sup> Robert Taylor, *Film propaganda: Soviet Russia and Nazi Germany*, 1998, 148.

<sup>37</sup> Ian Kershaw, *The Hitler Myth: Image and Reality in the Third Reich*, 2001, 140.

<sup>38</sup> Richard W. McCormick, *German essays on Film*, 2004, 160.

story takes place in 1733 in Stuttgart. The Jewish villain, Süß, the finance minister of Wurttemberg, helps the newly appointed Duke, Karl Alexander, to create a corrupt state in which they are the benefactors of immense power and wealth.<sup>39</sup> Süß is the stereotypical Jew, money grubbing, and manipulative. The town of Wurttemberg, in the film, has a ban that keeps all Jews out of the city walls. However, Süß is able to convince the Duke to remove this ban, and to give him control of all the roads of Wurttemberg. Süß becomes corrupt quickly, raising all prices and putting the money in his own pocket. He conspires with his creepy Jewish lackey frequently through out the film, devising new ways to gain power and manipulate the Duke. He rapes the married daughter of the council chairman, Sturm. When the people of Wurttemberg revolt against him, he and his lackey hide in cowardice, and when arrested Süß lies to the court. In the end Süß is hanged for violating the book of law by “mingling flesh with a Christian.” By the end of the film Süß is disheveled, he no longer wears the disguise of finance minister, and he can be seen for what he really is: a Jew, with all the supposed stereotypical facial characteristics.

This film drew large audiences to the box office with a promise of an exciting plot, filled with drama, violence, sex, and trickery, without the grotesque images that some National Socialist films used when depicting the Jews. Subtle methods, in fact, made people more inclined to go see the film. *Jud Süß* was the sixth most profitable film between the years 1940 and 1942.<sup>40</sup> Its more subtle use of anti-Semitism made it viewable to those people who did not care for Nazi ideals, as well as those who did, thus ensuring that it reached a large audience. The film was entertaining, and for people who

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<sup>39</sup> Veit Harlan, *Jud Süß*, 1940.

<sup>40</sup> Nicholas Reeves, *The Power of Propaganda: Myth or Reality*, 1999, 114-116.

were already anti-Semitic it just reinforced the reasonable necessity of Hitler's plan to rid Germany of the Jews.

The story of Joseph Süß Oppenheimer, in fact, long predated Nazism. It was based off Wilhelm Hauff's 1827 novella, and its anti-Semitism did not come into being with the rise of the Nazis.<sup>41</sup> Anti-Semitism existed long before the Third Reich, and manifested itself in accusations of ritual murder or blood libel, and in massacres, and the exiling of Jews from Europe, and it circulated in literature, and eventually, film. Helmut Walser Smith argues that ignorance and fear of Jewish traditions, and economic power made it easy for governments to exploit the anti-Semitic prejudice and hatred that lingers within nations.<sup>42</sup> There was a large amount of pre-existing anti-Semitism when the Nazi's came to power; the NSDAP was not the root of anti-Semitism, but a government that was able to exploit latent prejudice of the Jews, for its own benefit.

Because the story of Joseph Süß Oppenheimer is such an old one, and takes place in a time period so far removed from the 1940s, and because the Jews have been recurrently persecuted over centuries of history, the film seems to beg its audience to return to the identity of their old German ancestors. The film puts anti-Semitism in a historical context; it makes the audience understand that this is not a new concept but one that their German ancestors lived by, and in this way it was able activate dormant or unrealized anti-Semitism. It is therefore in line with the völkisch thinking out of which National Socialist ideology arose in the first place.<sup>43</sup> The final line of the film is that the

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<sup>41</sup> There is even a British version of the film, made six years earlier, whose theme is the condemnation of anti-Semitism. <http://www.britmovie.co.uk/>, *Jud Süß*, 1934.

<sup>42</sup> Helmut Walser Smith, *The Butcher's Tale: Murder and Anti-Semitism in a German Town*, 2002.

<sup>43</sup> George Mosse, *The Crisis of German Ideology*, 1998.

Jews should be forever banned from Wurttemberg in order to “save themselves (the people of Wurttemberg) much sorrow and the blood of their children, and children’s, children.” The film shows that the Jews have been a national problem for centuries, and that the Nazi’s were not doing anything different than revolutionary governments had done in the past to deal with the “problem.”<sup>44</sup>

On the other hand, some forms of anti-Semitism were relatively new. And some filmed presentations of it were new as well. *Der ewige Jude*, or The Eternal Jew, was a sixty-six minute long, anti-Semitic rant that was also launched in 1940. Fritz Hippler, Reich General Manager for Film in the Propaganda Ministry, directed the film personally. Hippler had been an early supporter of the Nazi party; he joined in 1925, at the age of 17.<sup>45</sup> Hippler was one of the main organizers of the 1933 book burning in Berlin. Footage for his film was brought back from ghettos within Poland.<sup>46</sup> The film, made in the style of a documentary, depicts the supposedly stereotypical facial and cultural characteristics of the Jews juxtaposed to the National Socialist state’s ideals of the purified Aryan race.

In the film the “Jewish race” is compared to rats, and the diseases they carry. One scene opens with rats wriggling over each other, gnawing on German food stuffs, crawling out of gutters, infesting the city in hoards with a voice-over :

In this way they (the rats) spread disease, plague, leprosy, typhoid fever, cholera, dysentery and so on...They are cunning, cowardly, and cruel, and are found mostly in large packs. Among the animals they represent the rudiment of an insidious and underground destruction-

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<sup>44</sup> *Jud Süß*, Veit Harlan, 1940.

<sup>45</sup> Susan Tegel, *Nazis and the Cinema*, 2007, 150.

<sup>46</sup> Ralph Georg Reuth, *Goebbels*, 1993, 261.



*(The scene cuts to several shots of Jewish men in a busy market and each man eyes the camera as it films them)  
just like the Jews among human beings.<sup>47</sup>*

The film gives false statistics that denounce the Jews as corrupt, manipulative, dishonest, and dirty. The film shows the way in which Jews cover up their true identity to try to blend in with the German population. The film shows maps, and the narrator explains the how the Jew has spread over the world like a disease. To finish the film, there is a clip of Adolf Hitler's speech to the Nazi Reichstag in 1939, in which he first makes his horrifying claim that Germany's new "defensive" war against Jewish manipulation will result in the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe.

The film was a tremendous failure at the box office. Even though the film was cheap, and there were huge political pressures to go see it, only one million people paid to see it. According to SD reports of the time, much of the film was thought to be so repulsive that people avoided its screening.<sup>48</sup>

Compared to the twenty million people who went out to the cinema to see *Jud Süß*, in that same year, one twentieth paid to see *Der ewige Jude*. *Jud Süß* was not successful because it was anti-Semitic but because it appealed to such a large variety of viewers. Goebbels goal of making propaganda less overt seemed to pay off. Adolf Hitler generally wanted the emphasis of the films to be on "simple ideas that the masses could easily understand," with an appeal to the emotions of the target audience.<sup>49</sup> By using Hitler's preferred method the viewers would have no doubt that they were about to watch a pro-Nazi film, and would therefore have an easier time making an individual

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<sup>47</sup> Fritz Hippler, *Der ewige Jude*, 1940.

<sup>48</sup> Nicholas Reeves, *The Power of Propaganda: Myth or Reality*, 1999, 116-117.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, 83.

decision as to whether or not to believe it. In contrast, Goebbels believed that as long as “propaganda as a tendency, as a characteristic, as an attitude, remained in the background... then propaganda became effective in every respect.”<sup>50</sup>

Receipts show not only what people wanted to see, but also what they actually saw, and therefore could be affected by. In 1933, 244.9 million tickets were sold at German cinemas. By 1943 attendance of German films rose to a high of 1,116.5 million tickets sold.<sup>51</sup> In comparing the box office results of the two highly anti-Semitic films, *Der ewige Jude* and *Jud Süß*, one can see that Goebbels subtle propaganda method was more successful at drawing large crowds to the cinemas.

However, nations abroad were not so easily convinced of the superiority of the Nazi ideals. As early as 1934 and 1935 all of German film exports declined significantly, accounting for only 8 percent of the film industry’s revenue, and only continued to do so as Germany marched the world towards war.<sup>52</sup>

Year	Percentage of Industry’s Revenue earned from exports	Industries Losses due to decline in exported films
Pre 1933	40%	-
1934/1935	Less than 15%	8-10 million Reich Marks
1936/1937	Less than 7%	More than 10 million Reich Marks

Table 1: *The effects of Propaganda on Foreign Distribution of German Films*<sup>53</sup>

Foreign nations were reluctant to import German films that exhibited themes of pro-Nazism, and racial superiority. This reluctance was perhaps a victory for German propaganda; it was proof of the potential power that the films possessed. By

<sup>50</sup> David Welch, *Propaganda and the German Cinema; 1933-1945*, 1983, 45.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, 35.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, 31.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, 100-101.

discontinuing their purchase of German films, the allied nations made evident their fear of the potential messages that German propaganda could incite, and suggested that their nations were not above the influence of anti-Semitic propaganda.

As other nations turned down German films, the German Film industry worked hard to see that film propaganda was deliberately, and strategically distributed among the people of Germany. It was a useful instrument for spreading the ideals of the Third Reich within Germany because it reached a large, and diverse audience with ease. Not only could people of all ages and social classes pay to attend the cinema, which they did do in increasing numbers: the audience grew in size from 238.4 million tickets sold in 1932/3 to a high of 1,116.5 million tickets sold in 1943, but there were plenty of other opportunities to enlighten the people of Germany.<sup>54</sup>

By 1936 the Hitler Youth organization had regular Sunday shows known as Film Hours, at which there would be a speaker, a film followed by a discussion, flag hoisting, and singing. The SD reports noted that the youth film hours were especially appreciated in rural areas where they were one of the only forms of entertainment.<sup>55</sup> Propaganda films were also used in schools, for educational purposes. Perhaps the most inventive means of distribution were the 1,500 mobile film units that took films to suburban and rural areas, where perhaps there were no cinemas.<sup>56</sup> The RMVP made an effort to distribute the film propaganda as far and as evenly as possible throughout the Reich. The youth were especially sought-after, because they were believed to be the most easily persuaded of the strength of the Nazi ideology.

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<sup>54</sup> David Welch, *Propaganda and the German Cinema; 1933-1945*, 1983, 31, 35.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 27.

<sup>56</sup> Nicholas Reeves, *The Power of Propaganda: Myth or Reality*, 1999, 99-100.

To say that National Socialist Film propaganda transformed, or molded the minds of the masses is inaccurate, but that was not ever its intention. To say the Ministry's ambition was to mold minds would be to suggest that the audience had no investment in the film, and that Germans did not have the ability to judge the values of the film on an individual basis. The purpose of film propaganda, as Goebbels put it, was "to lead the people to an understanding that will allow it to willingly and without internal resistance devote itself to the tasks and goals of a superior leadership."<sup>57</sup> The aim of the RFK was to create films that activated latent anti-Semitism and the inherent patriotism that a nation possesses in a time of crisis. It is important to reiterate that the RMVP created, through the hegemony of well-orchestrated propaganda, a situation in which every film viewed had been approved and censored by members of the Nazi party. Every single film of the 1,090 feature length films produced between 1933 and 1945 was dissected to ensure there was nothing that challenged the regime's ideals.<sup>58</sup> The coordination of German cinemas was as much an effort to propagate Nazi values, as it was an effort to drown out opposing, or even tangential, voices.

National Socialist film propaganda did not transform the minds of the people in Germany; no film was capable of turning an ordinary man into an executioner. What film propaganda did do was reinforce the common man's hatred of the Jews; it did elevate Hitler as a godlike figure; and it gave people a people a sense of belonging. Membership and exclusion within the Nazi party elicited a mob like mentality among the people. Like a gang, the Nazi party provided its members with a certain amount of protection, and a feeling of self-worth.

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<sup>57</sup> Randall L. Bytwerk, *Landmark Speeches of National Socialism*, 2008, 41-51.

<sup>58</sup> David Welch, *Propaganda and the German Cinema; 1933-1945*, 1983, 187.

The strengths of the RMVP were that it coordinated all propaganda so that it all said the same thing. The films themselves were able to appeal to people's emotions, to activate latent anti-Semitism, and to condition the social practices of the German people to fit the Nazi Party's political agenda. Another strength that is inherent in propaganda, is that the film makes suggestions, and made appeals to the audience, but once the film had been put on a reel and shipped off to the cinemas it was out of the hands of the propagandist. Ultimately each individual had to make a decision as to how they would deal with the National Socialist revolution, and the party's beliefs. Therefore, the support that the Nazi party gathered between the years of 1933 and 1943 was encouraged, and certain social practices were conditioned by propaganda, but the continued growth of the party lay in the hands of the people. Film propaganda acted as a vehicle to "bring the broad masses knowledge and clarity," to instill in them fear and faith, and to validate the actions of the National Socialist leaders.<sup>59</sup> They were not forced to believe in Nazism. They chose to accept the suggestions and appeals of the media. The film propaganda was so persuasive that Germans were able to convince themselves of, and give their genuine support to, the Nazi ideals, of their own free will.

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<sup>59</sup> Randall L. Bytwerk, *Landmark Speeches of National Socialism*, 2008, 41-51.

## Beauty and Duty

The “New Woman” of the Weimar years was portrayed as a young, lipstick-wearing, cigarette smoking, sexually liberated, cosmopolitan woman, who could be found in the dance hall or the cabaret.<sup>60</sup> These women, seeking sexual, economic or political emancipation, appeared to disregard their duties as daughters, mothers, and wives.<sup>61</sup> This image was pervasive in advertisements in addition to being a social reality. The prevailing image would change when Adolf Hitler became chancellor of Germany in 1933. Hitler had made his antifeminist politics clear from the very beginning of the National Socialist movement: women were to be childrearing, domestic, and loyal to both the state and their husbands. The archetype of the 1920’s New Woman may seem to be the furthest deviation possible from Hitler’s, and therefore the Nazi’s, conception of women demonstrating their loyalty to the state by being wives and mothers. Yet scholars have astutely pointed out that the social reality of the Weimar years was different from the image; the mass culture of Weimar—its “Girlikultur”—was not as radical nor as liberating as many claimed, for it ultimately still looked to marriage as women’s overriding goal.<sup>62</sup> The youth, independence, social status, and beauty of the “New” Woman were pieces that made for a very traditionally desirable wife.

The National Socialist party did not recognize or appreciate the traditional gender roles behind cosmopolitan femininity in the 1920’s. Officially, it discouraged women from being in the work place, and from being involved in politics —seemingly not seeing

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<sup>60</sup>Barlow, et al., “The Modern Girl around the World: A Research Agenda and Preliminary Findings,” *Gender and History*, 2005, 245.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, 245.

<sup>62</sup> Günter Berghaus, “Girlikultur: Feminism, Americanism, and Popular Entertainment in Weimar Germany,” *Journal of Design History*, 1988, 203.

the contradiction of mobilizing women under the banner of National Socialism, or the hypocrisy of female Nazi leaders calling for women to be followers.<sup>63</sup> Yet there was more continuity than one might think, between the advertisements published during the Nazi regime and those published in the 1920's. This continuity existed primarily in the general approach toward advertising. In the 1930's advertisements that targeted a female audience attempted to make women feel and look beautiful, in order to satisfy consumer culture as it had done in the 1920's. However the Nazis also used women's advertising to propagate National Socialist ideology, and in particular, the obligation that German women had to the Nation.

National Socialist ideology called for women to stay at the margin of the male world of war and racial fitness. Women were to remain in the domestic sphere. The National Socialist sentiment toward women was unmistakable,

The slogan "emancipation of women" was invented by Jewish intellectuals. If the man's world is said to be the State, his struggle, his readiness to devote his powers to the service of the community, then it may perhaps be said that the woman's is a smaller world. For her world is her husband, her family, her children, and her home. But what would become of the greater world if there were no one to tend and care for the smaller one? The great world cannot survive if the smaller world is not stable. We do not consider it correct for the women to interfere in the world of the man. We consider it natural if these two worlds remain distinct.<sup>64</sup>

Historian Claudia Koonz, claims that two topics: triumph over the Jews and enslavement of women into the home, where the only principles that Hitler never vacillated on.<sup>65</sup> Yet, Nazi tenets of women's domesticity conflicted with other parts of their program. First, the NSDAP knew that it was important to propagate, and communicate Nazi ideals to the

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<sup>63</sup> One of the best-known female spokes persons for the NSDAP was Gertrud Scholtz-Klink.

<sup>64</sup> Adolf Hitler, Speech to NSDAP's women organization September 1934, <http://www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk/GERwomen.htm>, 4/2009.

<sup>65</sup> Claudia Koonz, *Mothers in the Fatherland*, 1968, 53.

women of Germany. As a movement (rather than just a political party), the NSDAP understood that their efforts at coordinating the film, theatre, and music industries, giving speeches all over the nation, and rewriting the curriculum in German schools, was not only a step toward power, but that ultimately the party could only be as extensive as the conviction of its following. They wanted to politicize the whole nation—including and especially the domestic sphere.<sup>66</sup>

The women of Germany were not just citizens but were also the mothers who educated and disciplined Germany's youth, the homemakers who picked the food the family ate and the clothes they wore, the wives and, as the war went on, they became Germany's workers. In that respect the women had enormous influence over everyday life in Germany. The Nazis tried to corral and control every powerful group in Germany, from the church to the school.<sup>67</sup> They could not afford to leave women alone. But how to accomplish this, especially in an environment where women were not supposed to be "public," but rather were supposed to remain in the home? Women were not supposed to go to films, for instance; they were supposed to stay at home with the children. The transition in the 1930's was from the fun-loving, modern, emancipated Weimar women to the sober, serious, goal-oriented "German" woman of Nazi thought.

In this chapter we will look specifically at the popular family periodical *die Gartenlaube* as a means of communicating, to the broader public through less overt channels, Nazi ideals to women, in subtle and in not so subtle ways. In practice, this emerged as the National Socialists attempt to *speak* to women. Through the analysis of

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<sup>66</sup> Ian Kershaw, *The Hitler Myth: Image and Reality in the Third Reich*, 2001, 3.

<sup>67</sup> William Sheridan Allen, *The Nazi Seizure of Power: The Experience of a Single German Town, 1930-1935*, 2008.



advertisements for beauty products fashion spreads, and illustrative covers, this chapter will show that the NSDAP's approach to communication with women, as a subset of society at large, was very different than the vigorous, overt, fear-inducing approach taken when they were constructing speeches, or writing films.

The most crucial part of this communication was racial purity. In magazines such as *die Gartenlaube*, anti-Semitic indoctrination and the NSDAP's womanly ideals shone through both overt and more subtle avenues, whether in articles on women's sports, recipes, or in the faces of blonde women washing their hair or giving their child a bath. This subtle propaganda was as much a part of everyday life as the pamphlets on the streets. Perhaps it was even more influential. People could choose to 'tune out' National Socialist pamphlets or posters, or not to attend the cinema. Around 1895 *die Gartenlaube* had been Germany's most popular magazine, and although its popularity had begun to decline by 1900, it remained a popular magazine until publication ceased in 1944.<sup>68</sup> This magazine was widely read, and enjoyed among middle-class families during The Third Reich.

*Die Gartenlaube*, which is the German word for arbor or gazebo,<sup>69</sup> was an illustrated family paper that began publication in 1853. From the very first issue, it targeted the upper middle class family. Kristen Belgium has argued that the press, and in particular *die Gartenlaube*, which happened to be the most popular periodical of the time, guided the people of Germany toward a national identity in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>68</sup>Kristen Belgium, *Popularizing the Nation: Audience, Representation, and the Production of Identity in Die Gartenlaube, 1853-1900*, 1998, xi.

<sup>69</sup> Another possible meaning for the German noun *die Gartenlaube* is: an escape from everyday life. It represents a place to relax and to unwind.

century.<sup>70</sup> At a time when Germany was still establishing itself as a nation, and still trying to find its identity, *die Gartenlaube* used imagery of Germany, and of other cultures, and presented short serial novels, bibliographies, and poetry, to drastically affect and subtly manipulate the image and understanding that the German people had of Germany and what it meant to be German.

The magazine was a weekly occurrence in the lives of many German families. Every issue included a beautiful cover illustration, either a painting or a photograph with varying themes. Its covers were artistically rendered during the Weimar years; *die Gartenlaube* had no photographed covers until the early 1930's. Some of the themes the magazine covers included were nature, geography, and photos or drawings depicting different seasonal activities or landscapes such as a sunset over a pond on the cover of a spring issue in 1925 (see figure 5 in appendix), or a little girl picking flowers on the cover of a February issue.<sup>71</sup> After 1910, the body of the magazine included many illustrations and photos as well as paintings and drawings. The first story in the magazine was generally something short about what was going on in German politics. Then there was always an article about nature, or the lives, art, and culture of people in other countries or other parts of Germany. Excerpts from popular novels, or serialized stories of the day served as the centerpiece for each issue, followed by a page of the latest women's fashion and recipes, a page of games and cartoons, and finally, advertisements.

*Die Gartenlaube's* organization (politics, followed by nature, family, and commerce) was an implicit ranking of the magazine's priorities and it made for an all inclusive, family themed magazine. Additionally, the readers did not fit into the category

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<sup>70</sup> Ibid, xi.

<sup>71</sup> *Die Gartenlaube*, Vol. 9, February, 1925.

of working class, nor were they elites. *Die Gartenlaube* targeted a middle-class audience by providing “a diverse, yet regular and predictable, fare of reading material for male and female, young and old.”<sup>72</sup> Its readers had a disposable income. In 1928 *die Gartenlaube* cost 40 Pfennig per week and by 1933 it cost only 30.<sup>73</sup>

Although the Nazi party certainly did have an influence over what was printed in *die Gartenlaube*, it is important to keep in mind that it was not directly a National Socialist magazine. It was not written and published directly out of Nazi headquarters in Munich, unlike many other periodicals. Magazines such as the Nazi women’s magazine *NS Frauen-Warte*, and the Working Association of German-Aryan Manufacturers of the Clothing Industry’s (Adefa) fashion magazine *Illustrierte Textil-Zeitung*, were both more radical avenues of National Socialist propaganda than *die Gartenlaube*.

*Die Gartenlaube* was an advantageous form of propaganda because the middle class ideal of womanhood generally gets blown up as the magazine works to describe the general population’s ideal of womanhood. This was a different audience for the NSDAP. A different audience, namely the family, called for a different approach to propaganda than had previously been used when making films and writing speeches or plays. This audience required greater subtleness than other vehicles of propaganda. It was more private, and therefore it was more personal. It encouraged women to take an active role in their lives, and the lives of their children, and showed them ways to do it, from a strictly domestic perspective. The advertisements seemed only to sell products rather than push a political ideology. But by buying the product, often times these women were

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<sup>72</sup> Kristen Belgum, *Popularizing the Nation: Audience, Representation, and the Production of Identity in Die Gartenlaube, 1853-1900*, 1998, xii.

<sup>73</sup> In 1873 it was established that 1 Mark was equal to 100 Pfennig. In 1933, 30 Pfennig was equal to 10 USA cents.

buying into the NSDAP ideology. Although the Nazi party believed that women had a specific place in society, that of the home, and discouraged them from participating elsewhere, they did not underestimate the necessity of creating a female following.

In the 1870s, *die Gartenlaube* had been the most widely distributed and read periodical in all of Germany. In the first 50 years of its publication, the magazine praised Judaism for its “family oriented and picturesque religious practices.”<sup>74</sup> In 1916 *die Gartenlaube* changed hands and came under the ownership of Alfred Hugenberg, a German industrialist and future financier of the future NSDAP. He controlled the Scherl Publishing Company, one of the largest newspaper, periodical, and book publishing companies in Berlin, and the company that published *die Gartenlaube*. He also had a controlling interest in UFA, Germany's largest feature film and newsreel production company.<sup>75</sup> He was the elected chairman of the German National People's Party (DNVP) in 1928, and was well known for his staunch nationalism, and reactionary political and social ideology.<sup>76</sup> In his position as chairman of the DNVP he opposed the very idea of the Weimar Republic. In 1929 Hitler and Hugenberg joined forces in a campaign against the Young Plan, the reparations plan that superseded the Dawes Plan. This union between the two men left Hugenberg's propaganda machine at Hitler's disposal.<sup>77</sup> By 1931 Hugenberg had made a governing alliance with the National Socialist party.<sup>78</sup> As a supporter of the Nazi Party, Hugenberg had no reservations about promoting nationalist

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<sup>74</sup> Richard S. Levy *Anti-Semitism: A Historical Encyclopedia of Prejudice and Persecution*, 2005, 254.

<sup>75</sup> Robert Wistrich, *Who's who in Nazi Germany*, 2001, 127.

<sup>76</sup> John Leopold, *Alfred Hugenberg: The Radical Nationalist Campaign against the Weimar Republic*, 1977.

<sup>77</sup> Robert Wistrich, *Who's who in Nazi Germany*, 2001, 127.

<sup>78</sup> Hermann Beck, *A Fateful Alliance: German Conservatives and Nazis in 1933: the Machtergreifung in a New Light*, 2008, 2-3.

ideas in his magazine. As the Nazis rose to power in 1933, *die Gartenlaube* was still a very popular magazine in Germany, but the content was becoming unmistakably more anti-Semitic and pro-Nazi. Ultimately the periodical would be renamed *die neue Gartenlaube* in 1938 as a statement that this periodical reframed itself and had become a periodical that promoted the Nazi ideals.

As early as 1925 Hitler had said of the German woman: “if she is not there, not only the woman is lacking, but also the youth, and therefore the future.”<sup>79</sup> Hitler believed from the beginning that the movement with the fewest women would have the least strength.<sup>80</sup> His speech shows his complete disregard for women, he speaks about them passively, which highlights the fact that what Hitler is emphasizing in this speech is not the importance of the woman, but the importance of the youth of Germany to the Nazi movement. Despite his disrespect, he recognized the influence that women had over their children, politically and socially.

Hitler’s emphasis on the German youth was not only a political statement, but also was a message that spoke directly to the women of Germany. It put pressure on women to choose their husband based on his Aryan features. The goal of the National Socialists in appealing to women on a more personal level (through advertisements, fashion spreads, etc.) was to make Germany’s women feel at once beautiful, dutiful, and needed, while instilling in them all of the ideology of the Nazi party including, but not limited to, anti-Semitism.

Drastic changes can be seen in the printing of *die Gartenlaube* almost immediately with the onset of the Third Reich. The covers of the issues are particularly

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<sup>79</sup> Randall L. Bytwerk, *Landmark Speeches of National Socialism*, 2008, 25.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, 25-26.

eye-catching. In 1932 the covers of *die Gartenlaube* were unique each week. On January 7<sup>th</sup>, there is a wonderful painting of a woman feeding deer, titled “Meeting at the Forest’s Edge.”<sup>81</sup> One month later, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of February, the cover showed a toddler on the phone with a caption that reads “Please, Fräulein, connect me with Papa.” Regardless of the specific valence of the illustration, each week offered a new and unique representation of people of different ages, undertaking an assortment of activities, which usually included some natural element or aspect. However, because Hugenberg had recently taken control of *die Gartenlaube* and had formed a political alliance with the Nazi party, it is not surprising that we already begin to see some Nazi ideals in the 1932 publications. For example, the 11<sup>th</sup> issue of 1932, published on March 16<sup>th</sup>, was a photo of a blonde woman, looking contentedly over her shoulder at her smiling, blonde toddler. In the photo both the mother and the son are seen wearing white clothing, and clearly fit the Aryan ideal. Therefore, while there were still a variety of themes depicted in the covers of the early 1930’s, it is evident, from the large shift from diverse illustrations, that the magazine was already narrowing its scope.

Beginning in 1933 however, the covers of *die Gartenlaube* immediately became less diverse and only included Nazi symbols and men and women with stereotypical Aryan features. The illustrations began to include anti-feminist and anti-Semitic imagery that promoted domesticity and put an emphasis on purity. Pictures of mothers with their blond children became the trend, as is the case with the covers of the March 16<sup>th</sup> and June 1st 1933 publications (see figure 8 in the appendix). Occasionally one would see a photo

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<sup>81</sup> *Die Gartenlaube*, January 7, 1932.

of strong, handsome, Aryan men hard at work, or a photo that advertised the politics of the day such as one of the Hitler youth (see figure 7 in the appendix).<sup>82</sup>

The pure, Aryan race that the Nazi party held in such high esteem included attributes such as blonde hair, blue eyes, an athletic build, fertility, and extraordinary intelligence, and was based on a long history of 'völkish thought.'<sup>83</sup> Even in women, strength was considered a virtue and an indication of fertility. The NSDAP's desire to achieve this ideal German type became so strong that compulsory sterilizations came under effect to keep from spreading genetic "defects" throughout the nation.<sup>84</sup> It was considered the job of women of Germany to participate in breeding this pure race.

In the 1920's the covers of *die Gartenlaube* had been exclusively paintings and drawings of everything from landscapes to still-lives, to animals and people. After 1933, there were no more paintings or drawings, or animals, or comic scenes of boys throwing snowballs, but only photos of the National Socialist party and its values.<sup>85</sup> The Nazi party was intent on having complete control over all propaganda and social commentary. Paintings and drawings leave too much room for artistic creativity and interpretation. Too often, paintings say something about the politics of the time, or the artist's beliefs. Photos, on the other hand, were the artistic style of the time, and because there is not much interpretation involved in the observation of photos, the magazine had complete

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<sup>82</sup> *Die Gartenlaube*, Vol. 31, August 3, 1933.

<sup>83</sup> Eve Garrard, Geoffrey Scarre, *Moral Philosophy and the Holocaust*, 2003, 11; Völkish thinkers longed to bring back the sense of community that existed prior to the industrial era. They believed that Germans were a unique and superior population, and that the corruptive force in their lives, and the lives of their families was the Jew; Marvin Perry, Frederick M. Schweitzer, *Antisemitism*, 2002, 88-89.

<sup>84</sup> Renate Bridenthal, Atina Grossmann, and Marion A. Kaplan, *When Biology become Destiny: Women in Weimar and Nazi Germany*, 1984, 273-275.

<sup>85</sup> *Die Gartenlaube*, January 28, 1933.

control over what message the pictures were giving, this left much less room for artistic freedom. Coincidentally, in 1933 the Reich's Cultural Chamber (RCC) was set up to insure that none of the nation's artists (writers, poets, sculptors, painters, printmakers, etc.) were producing any art that went against Nazi ideology. All "creative Germans" were forced to join the organization. Some joined while others left Germany in protest. This censorship of creativity and the emigration of many of Germany's artists may help explain the loss of art seen in *die Gartenlaube* around the same time.<sup>86</sup> This is not to say that there were not plenty of Nazi paintings, but the propaganda that the NSDAP was incorporating into *die Gartenlaube* was, in 1933, still only given in subtle doses, and for this reason, a pro-Nazi painting on the cover of *die Gartenlaube* was not consistent with the muted propaganda that the magazine attempted to utilize.

By 1939 *die Gartenlaube* had already become *die neue Gartenlaube*, and nearly every cover of the periodical was a photo of a beautiful and elegant woman, and when it wasn't, it was a picture of a National Socialist symbol. The symbols were sometimes as overt as an Eagle, or a member of the Hitler youth, or as subtle or innocent as a woman with her child. One cover photo in particular, stood out. In February of 1939, in the 7<sup>th</sup> issue of the year, the cover is a picture of a blonde woman, leaning her head on her right arm, and she is looking up, with big, wide eyes, and sultry lips. She is captivating; it is hard not to look at her face. But there is more to it: all around her are masked faces that are nearly transparent and clownish. The face in the lower right corner of the image is particularly disturbing, matching the anti-Semitic features used in national socialist

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<sup>86</sup> Alex Woolf, *Questioning History: Nazi Germany*, 2004, 27.



propaganda posters to characterize Jews in the 1930's and early 40's: the face has empty, sunken eyes, a dark complexion, and a long hooked nose (see figure 10 in the appendix).

Consistent with the censorship of the art published in the periodical, it is not surprising that the National Socialist Party had a significant influence on other creative facets of the magazine, including fashion spreads. Because of their 'völkish' beliefs, Nazi leaders would not allow foreign influence in Germany's industries. On the topic of German fashion, one writer said,

Our national pride alone should make us resist the imitation of foreign fashions—besides, what is fashionable for a dainty, brunette French woman absolutely does not fit a striking, blonde, blue-eyed German.<sup>87</sup>

In the context of the garment industry "foreign" probably means "Jewish." The National Socialists believed that the Jews were foreigners who were corrupting and monopolizing German industry. Along with coordinating the purging of all Jews from the film, theater, music, radio, and print industries, the National Socialist Party also coordinated the women's fashion industry. The Nazis attempted to purge the Jews from the fashion industry and to get rid of foreign influences on German fashion. In short, this was another way to purify Germany. The Nazis believed that the Jews were responsible for the "degenerate" cosmetics and clothing of the "New Woman" that was fostered during the Weimar years.<sup>88</sup> However, this 1920's "cosmopolitan" look was not unique to Germany. It was spreading all over the world. The modern girl phenomenon could be seen in Japan, America, France and South Africa, and one thing they all had in common

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<sup>87</sup> Irene Guenther, *Nazi Chic? Fashioning Women in the Third Reich*, 2004, 145.

<sup>88</sup> Valerie Steele, *Encyclopedia of Clothing and Fashion*, 2005, 8.

was that these trends were “continually incorporating elements from elsewhere.”<sup>89</sup>

National Socialist ideology and propaganda railed against the fact that ideal beauty, instead of being determined by motherhood, or by the woman’s relationship to her husband, was found in the image of a whore, pieced together by foreign fashion influences and cosmetics, cigarettes, eroticism, and self obsession. The Nazis believed that this corruption of the notion of beauty was a deliberate, Jewish plot.

This whole development was one of the masterstrokes of the Jewish infection that still plagues us today. The entire Aryan world has been captured by this Jewish spirit.<sup>90</sup>

The anti-feminist trend in National Socialist actions therefore arose because of the sudden flux of propaganda that condemned the image of the “New Woman” that existed in the Weimar years.

The German Fashion Bureau was established in 1933, with Frau Magda Goebbels as the honorary president. The Bureau concerned itself with “fashion consciousness and feminine aesthetics,”<sup>91</sup> steering away from the make-up and flashy clothing of the 1920’s.

In the 1933 issues of *die Gartenlaube*, it is clear that the women modeling the clothing in the fashion spread are wearing make-up, and the clothing is stylish; it includes low cut v-necks, floor length evening gowns, necklaces, hats, gloves and other accessories.<sup>92</sup> By 1939 the fashion spreads do not even include photos of models, but are only drawings. Slowly, evening gowns disappeared from the spreads almost entirely, and

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<sup>89</sup> Barlow, et al., “The Modern Girl around the World: A Research Agenda and Preliminary Findings,” *Gender and History*, 2005, 246.

<sup>90</sup> Irene Guenther, *Nazi Chic? Fashioning Women in the Third Reich*, 2004, 149.

<sup>91</sup> Fritz Karl Michael Hillenbrand, *Underground Humor in Nazi Germany, 1933-1945*, 1995, 94.

<sup>92</sup> *Die Gartenlaube*, April 27, 1933; May 5, 1933.

the style lost the frills, and became more conservative.<sup>93</sup> On May 5<sup>th</sup> 1940 there was a fashion spread titled “For House and Garden,” that depicted women in sundresses or overalls, raking or watering the garden. By 1939, not only had the women’s fashion evolved, but there were more and more knitting patterns and sewing patterns for children’s clothes available within the magazine.<sup>94</sup> This is another example of a way in which mothers were expected to be involved in their children’s lives, especially with the start of the war, and it was a continuation of the anti-feminist trend. During a time of war, this pro-war propaganda encouraged women to be resourceful and industrious while maintaining their home and family. Women were not being asked to work for the war effort yet, but they were being asked to support it, by encouraging them to conserve. It was a transformation from vanity<sup>95</sup> to practicality, and it denotes the change in emphasis from the 1920’s independent, young, vigorous woman, to the Nazi ideal of the full-time mother.

In the third May publication, a three-page article in *die neue Gartenlaube*, called “The Mother” was published. It begins with a caption quoting Goethe that advises, “Nothing is more respectable than a woman with many children.” The article advertised the fact that the 21<sup>st</sup> of May 1939 was to be the first “Day of the German Mother.” Any women who had four or more children would be awarded a Cross of Parental Honor. Mothers with eight or more children received a Gold medal. This was a constant theme for German women under the Nazi Regime. It was well advertised that all women should

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<sup>93</sup> *Die Gartenlaube*, vol. 16, April 1939.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid*, vol. 21, June 19, 1940.

<sup>95</sup> There are some exceptions to this, however, for example in the February 7<sup>th</sup>, 1940 issue there is one page with drawings of women in night clothing, or undergarments. The advertisement, however, is not for the clothing, but contains instructions for washing and doing laundry, so the advertisement is still domestically oriented.

want to get married and have children, and they should want to do it while they were young and fit.<sup>96</sup>

This progression from young lady to mother was visible in advertisements for products like *Nivea Creme* and *Vasenol*. In 1932 a *Vasenol* advertisement shows a woman leaning over a bathtub, tending to herself. In May of 1933, a *Vasenol* advertisement for body powder has a picture of a young woman in a bathroom, and the caption reads, “be young.” In the June 8<sup>th</sup> publication of *die neue Gartenlaube* in 1939 there was an advertisement for *Vasenol* baby powder, with a picture of a young woman and a laughing baby. Although, in 1939 and 1940 there were still *Vasenol* advertisements for self-beautification,<sup>97</sup> the majority of the company’s efforts were geared towards selling baby powders and soaps to young mothers. This shift in the content of *Vasenol* advertisements is another example of the National Socialist anti-feminist movement, as seen through advertisements.

Even though the women in the advertisements became increasingly domestically oriented (and perhaps domesticated) there were still several products that were meant to enhance one’s own beauty and youthfulness. It is with these types of advertisements that one can begin to see more overt messages about racial purity and anti-Semitism. In 1933 an advertisement appeared in *die Gartenlaube* for which the biggest, boldest letters read: *NUR BLOND* (“only blonde”). The advertisement continued to appear in *die Gartenlaube* for its duration (until it ended in 1944). In each advertisement for *Nur blond* there was a beautiful blonde woman pictured. In the 1933 advertisements she is a straight-faced, seductive, well-known female figure of the time, and in the later

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<sup>96</sup> Wolfgang Benz, *A Concise History of the Third Reich*, 2006, 77-79.

<sup>97</sup> *Die Gartenlaube*, vol. 49, December 10, 1940, 52.

advertisements for the product she is a smiling and gentle, nameless poster child for the Nazi party. The product was a shampoo that was “specialized” for women with blond hair, making this top of the line product more exclusive than other hair products. Anti-Semitism could be more overt in advertisements like *Nur Blond* because those were the products that women bought. The ‘mob mentality’ and the fear of being ostracized or left behind was as much a part of choosing between hair products, as it was a part of deciding whether or not to support the Nazis. *Nur blond* advertisements must have been enticing to women who wanted to look and feel beautiful, where beauty was defined by the day’s Aryan standards.

Similar advertisements can be found in magazines in other countries, including the United States. For example, in the 1930’s, in America there was a product called *Blondex*, for which the advertisement reads: “How quickly blonde hair darkens if not given special care...prevents darkening. Brings back beauty to even the dullest hair.”<sup>98</sup> The advertisement is a color drawing of a blond woman wearing an apron and laughing. Whereas, the emphasis in American advertisement is on the product and the woman is depicted gaily, the emphasis in the German advertisement for *Nur Blond* is on the face of the woman in the picture. She is stoic and elegant, and a symbol of the Aryan race.

These *Nur blond* advertisements were fundamentally different from anti-Semitic propaganda in the 1940 film *der ewige Jude* in which director Fritz Hippler, is unashamed to throw anti-Semitism into the faces of the viewers, comparing Jews to rats and the plague; and they are fundamentally different than an address to the women of

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<sup>98</sup> *Good Housekeeping*, 11/01/1931, 221. <http://graphic-design.tjs-labs.com>, 4/2009.

Germany given by Walter Groß, the head of the Nazi Party's office of Racial Policy, October 13<sup>th</sup> 1934, stating

People are different...they are different in the depths of their hearts and natures, and in their abilities for good and evil. In the past people believed that these differences were accidental...we have learned that such ideas are false. We have learned that the differences between the major blood groups of the world, between the major races, are not the result of human action, but of the laws of Creation.<sup>99</sup>

Groß declared, without hesitation that there is a crucial difference between the people of each race, and that they are not equal. Conversely, these hair product advertisements were not forceful, but gentle and enticing. They were not calling women into action or requesting a change in ideology or life style; nor were they showing vulgar images or requiring the viewer to think or make a difficult decision. Instead they advertised the Aryan ideal, by seeking to appeal to women's vanity.

For example, in the 19th volume of *die Gartenlaube* in 1933, Ruth Eweler was featured in the *Roberts Nur blond* advertisement, which describes her as "the most beautiful German woman in the world, the ideal German type."<sup>100</sup> The "ideal German type" referred to someone like Gertrud Scholtz-Klink, who was famous for all of her German attributes. Eweler was quoted as saying that *Nur blond* "has given me my success in being elected the most beautiful German blonde." Another 1933 *Nur blond* advertisement featured the famous movie star and dancer Camilla Horn.<sup>101</sup> A sentence from the advertisement reads "shimmering blond hair beautifies each face." One can

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<sup>99</sup> <http://www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/gross.htm>, Dr Walter Groß, October 13, 1934.

<sup>100</sup> Gertrud Scholtz-Klink (1902-1999), referred to as the "lady Führer," was thought to have all the ideal attributes of German womanhood and was praised by the NSDAP for them. She was tall, blond, and not only that but she was married at 18, and had 11 children by the time she was 32; Alex Woolf, *Questioning History: Nazi Germany*, 2004, 29. See figure 1 in the appendix.

<sup>101</sup> Mae Tinee, "Goethe Masterpiece Makes a Great Film: Faust," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 12/26/1926.

only speculate what it must have been like to not be blond, at a time when blond women were considered the most beautiful, most pure, and most valuable women in the nation.

By 1939 *Roberts Nur blond* had stopped featuring famous blonde women in their advertisements and instead used photos of primarily two women, with similar hairstyles and faces and, of course, with hair so blond that in a black and white magazine it appeared white (see figure 2 in the appendix). These advertisements promise to make hair bright, shades lighter, aromatic, and silky. There is no longer just blond, brunette, and black, but now there is a particular shade of blonde, which is acceptable: “Matted and unsightly blond hair became the original bright gold of childhood years.”<sup>102</sup> In the same advertisement it read “obviously light, bright blond hair is the most beautiful jewelry of every woman.”<sup>103</sup>

Another common advertisement for women of the day was for a product called *Nivea-Creme*. It was created in 1911 by Dr. Oscar Troplowitz, and not only still exists today, but dominates the European market.<sup>104</sup> Although the written portion of the advertisements are not anti-Semitic, in the way that *Nur blond* advertisements were, the *Nivea-Creme* advertisements contain only blonde, beautiful women, where beautiful is defined by light eyes, a smiling face, and a voluptuous and sturdy body, either sitting on beaches in white bathing suits, working in the house, or playing in the snow.

There were also advertisements for a Nivea children’s soap directly underneath the advertisement for *Nivea-Creme* or Oil for women (see figure 3 in the appendix). These not-so-subliminal messages were the National Socialist leader’s gentle nudge to

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<sup>102</sup> *Die Gartenlaube*, vol. 21, 1939.

<sup>103</sup> *Die Gartenlaube*, vol. 12, 1939.

<sup>104</sup> Unknown, *Worldwide Nivea*. <http://www.nivea.com/history>, 12/03/2008.

the women of Germany to continue to bear and raise children, and acted as a constant reminder that the most beautiful women, the women they should aspire to be like, were all thoroughbred<sup>105</sup>, blonde, Germans. In order to promote this new standard of acceptability, advertisements included tanning, blonde, buxom women which supported the image of *Aryan-Nordic* beauty as “strong, healthy, natural, tanned, and fertile.”<sup>106</sup> The blonde women, and men depicted in all of Germany’s advertisements, for the duration of the National Socialist regime, were no coincidence. They were placed in advertisements in order to appeal to the nation’s vanity, and to create in women an ideal about beauty that was exclusive, and therefore more attractive than the image of the “New Woman” of the Weimar years. The image that the advertisements painted represented the National Socialist ideology.

With the increase in overt anti-Semitism in *die Gartenlaube*, came a decline in readership. Ultimately the diminishing readership provoked the magazine’s demise in 1944.<sup>107</sup> The increasingly overt methods of propaganda being used in *die Gartenlaube* may have contributed to this decline in readership. National socialist propaganda was not successful, on a national scale, when it denounced the Jews and called women and men into action for the preservation of the nation, but rather when it appealed to individuals on a personal level, subtly advertising Nazi ideals.

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<sup>105</sup> The word “thoroughbred” refers to the Nazi’s attempt to purify the German race, and weed out all potentially harmful blood including that of the Jews, homosexuals, and genetically defected, which included a wide range of people.

<sup>106</sup> Irene Guenther, *Nazi Chic? Fashioning Women in the Third Reich*, 2004, 99.

<sup>107</sup> Henry Wasserman, “Jews and Judaism in the Gartenlaube,” *Leo Baeck Institute Yearbook*, 1978, 47-60.



Images supporting the fundamentals of Nazi ideology regarding women: anti-Semitism, anti-feminism, pro-natalism, and racial purity (and to a lesser extent pro-war sentiments) can all be found within the pages of *die Gartenlaube* and *die neue Gartenlaube*. This mainstream periodical became a way for the National Socialist party to make a significant impact on the manner in which middle-class German women of the time perceived beauty, and the obligation they felt toward their families. These images and advertisements helped to reinforce National Socialist ideals on a weekly basis, not by calling women into action but by encouraging the viewers to react to the Jewish stereotype and to realize their obligation to the growth of a clean, new, fresh Aryan Germany.

## Conclusion

When talking about National Socialist propaganda it is impossible to separate the propaganda from the Nazi State. Joseph Goebbels himself said, in his speech at the 1934 Nuremberg party rally, that propaganda “is also a function of the modern state. It is the firm ground on which the state must stand.”<sup>108</sup> The Gleichschaltung, or co-ordination of the creative industries within Germany had much more to do with society than just coordinating a propaganda machine. Of course, along with the propaganda campaign came more physical acts of the state that banned Jews from the work place and banned marriages between Jews and other Germans. This thesis has shown that the mediums of film and advertising were used to promote National Socialist ideals and to encourage people to passively accept anti-Semitic and anti-feminist legislation.

Film and advertising were and are different in several ways, especially as vehicles of propaganda. They were extended to different audiences, which affected the way in which they were framed. Large audiences, of varying demographics attend the movies: men and women, young and old. A periodical like *die Gartenlaube* was probably read at home or in the office, in a more private setting and was suited to the middle class family. Because film was particularly expensive as a medium and popular among the German population, it was especially crucial to control the film industry while also maintaining a large audience. Yet a sensitivity to the audience—to consumer culture— was also evident in the advertisements in *die Gartenlaube*. They had to be able to sell the product and promote their ideals simultaneously without the advantage that film has of being able to dramatically entertain at the same time. With film, the Reichsfilmkammer made a

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<sup>108</sup> Randall L. Bytwerk, *Landmark Speeches of National Socialism*, 2008, 51.

careful and intentional effort to infuse all entertainment films with Nazi ideology, and to balance overtly propagandistic material like *Der ewige Jude* with more subtle films that would pay for themselves like *Jud Süß*. In each cinematic production, the absolute goal was always to use imagery of stereotypical characteristics and to recreate a mythical, historical past in order to convey and perpetuate the National Socialist messages.

With advertising the National Socialist party also deliberately inserted ideology that would reach a different sort of audience. The NSDAP worked hard to earn the trust of the women of Germany, even though Hitler held women in the lowest regard possible. Despite his contempt, he recognized that without the women of Germany, he could not have the support of the children of Germany who would be the future of the party and potential soldiers. Unlike film however, advertising was not an area over which the National Socialist party had complete control.

Measuring the success of the propaganda program of the party is a challenging task. Goebbels himself said:

Propaganda is a means to an end. Its purpose is to lead people to an understanding that will allow it to willingly and without internal resistance devote itself to the tasks and goals of the leadership.<sup>109</sup>

The success of Nazi propaganda is difficult to quantify. It can be looked at from the perspective of the State: where the explicit goal of the Nazi party was to coordinate the propaganda effort and to frame it around their ideals, to practice concerted censorship and to reach the largest, broadest populations possible. This succeeded; The propaganda ministry had complete control over the vast majority of printed, written, and spoken

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<sup>109</sup> Randall L. Bytwerk, *Landmark Speeches of National Socialism*, 2008, 42-43.

discourse.<sup>110</sup> However, the success of the propaganda program can also be looked at as manipulation of the people of the state. Many scholars, like Reeves, have said that the goal of propaganda is to mold and manipulate minds, to transform opinions.<sup>111</sup> If this was Goebbels' goal, I do not believe he succeeded. Many living under the Third Reich neither supported, nor went along with Nazi legislation or ideals. One example of a large faction of people who resisted the National Socialist ideals and leadership was the Catholic Church.<sup>112</sup>

In the broadest view, I believe that the success of Nazi propaganda should be measured, not in how many minds were transformed or people convinced, but in the program's ability to induce enough fear in the general populace (i.e., the governed) of the party and for the consequences of opposing the party's agenda, that people would become afraid to resist its legislation, ideals and initiatives. But the success of Nazi propaganda must be looked at on a case-by-case basis. Film, by nature is a more persuasive medium than advertisement. Which is not to deny that the RFG produced some terribly unsuccessful films, including *Der ewige Jude*. But *Der ewige Jude*, even though it was a financial failure, did succeed in promoting fear.

There are many questions that a person can ask about the nature of propaganda and about the success of propaganda under the Third Reich. One question that I have not addressed in this paper concerns why Hitler, the leader of an undemocratic and autocratic society where public opinion mattered very little, deliberately invested so much time, effort and resource into a ministry which had the aim of convincing Germans that the

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<sup>110</sup> Ian Kershaw, *The Hitler Myth: Image and Reality in the Third Reich*, 2001, 49.

<sup>111</sup> Nicholas Reeves, *The Power of Propaganda: Myth or Reality*, 1999, 119.

<sup>112</sup> Michael Burleigh, *The Third Reich: A New History*, 2001, 13-14.

party was justified in their actions. It is at least odd, and also unexpected that the party seemed to care what the citizens actually thought and believed.

It is not only about doing the right thing; People must understand that the right thing is the right thing. Propaganda includes everything that helps people to realize this.<sup>113</sup>

Why did it the opinions of the Germans matter to a dictator and his staff so much? I have come to wonder whether ultimately the propaganda effort was as much about getting the general citizenry (those not engaged in the military or SS) to sit still and quietly by whilst the "final solution" was executed. Perhaps another goal of National Socialist propaganda, because so much of Nazi ideology was based on promoting hatred of the Jews, was not only to condition people, and activate latent anti-Semitism, but also to create a mob mentality, in the sense that some people found a sense of belonging with the Nazi party, some found the opportunity to stir up trouble and inflict violence, and others simply conformed for the sake of not standing out. And this mentality was founded on a common hatred of the Jewish population.

We can talk about the Nazi party as an elite gang or club. If you wanted to be a member you had to pay dues and contribute to the continuing success of the party. In a time of uncertainty and war, belonging to the party apparently gave people hope and direction, a greater sense of security and community confidence. Certainly the myth of the Führer was created in part to instill hope, assurance, and pride in the people of Germany.<sup>114</sup> Perhaps being a part of the party made what was unfolding seem less frightening and threatening, less reprehensible, and even, in some perverse way, rational.

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<sup>113</sup> Randall L. Bytwerk, *Landmark Speeches of National Socialism*, 2008, 42.

<sup>114</sup> Ian Kershaw, *The Hitler Myth: Image and Reality in the Third Reich*, 2001, 4.

The NSDAP used many different mediums to convey their ideals: posters, speech, news, children's games and collector's cards, theatre, advertising and painting and drawing. This paper has only looked briefly at two of these. It is beyond the scope of this project to answer many of the questions raised above, but each of them add something to the discourse on how successful Nazi propaganda actually was.

"Gone with the Wind" had a lasting impact on the U.S. society. It is an iconographic film that portrayed a particular cultural attitude about the old south and about slavery in an incredibly vivid, captivating, and enormously entertaining manner. However, it is absolutely critical to note that the film did not call for a return to those days, or that culture and the institution of slavery. The film did not inspire hate, suspicion, mistrust, or violence and it was not produced or promoted by the United States government. In comparison, *Jud Süß* also portrayed a cultural attitude about race and although it was popular at the time of its release, it has gone down in history as a notorious, anti-Semitic, propaganda effort.

There seems to be a very fine line between entertainment and propaganda. Sometimes, that line disappears altogether. How does one separate art from propaganda? One fundamental difference between entertainment and propaganda is the investment that the state has in the final result. Even if individuals under the Third Reich produced artistic or literary material that was not influenced by the National Socialist party, it is easy to write those efforts off as being propaganda because essentially the entire entertainment industry of the time was governed by and alarmingly responsive to the propaganda machine set in place by Goebbels and Hitler. Another fundamental difference between art and propaganda is that propaganda has a goal. The goal of *Jud*

*Süß* was to ground the National Socialist hatred of the Jews in a historical context. It called for a return to a life more like the one in the movie, where Jews were banned from the city walls and where Germans only married Germans.

Ultimately, the fact most Germans chose to remain silent and passive in the face of the enormous evil perpetuated by the Nazis in their “final solution” is one sign of the awesome and awful success that the party’s propaganda efforts. Edmund Burke said “all that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing.”<sup>115</sup> The party was successful in achieving the silence of many conscientious people, which consequently facilitated the attempted extermination of an entire population. That many people accepted the role assigned to them by Hitler’s party and program, that the “final solution” was implemented, that so many concentration camps were set up around the country in plain sight to achieve the unimaginable, is surely a sign of Hitler and Goebbels’ “success.” What a terrible and evil success it was is both part of the dreadful legacy of the Third Reich and a grave moral and unrelenting historical question with which all people of good heart and intention must wrestle. Today there is still propaganda and there is still genocide and racism, which is why it is crucial that we understand the implications of this chapter of Germany’s history. For me, the ultimate and critical question is why conscientious people are so easily rendered passive and therefore insensible to and impotent in the face of the evil around them? This is a question that I hope to have further opportunity to explore.

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<sup>115</sup> Geoffrey Short, *Issue in Holocaust Education*, 2004, 2.

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## Appendix



RUTH EWELER, die schönste deutsche Blondine, der deutsche Idealtyp, sagt: „Daß mein Haar so schön gleichmäßig und hell ist, verdanke ich nur ‚Nurblond‘. Es hat mir zu meinem Erfolg verholfen, zur schönsten deutschen Blondine gewählt zu werden.“

### Deutsche Frauen die schönsten der Welt

In der ganzen Welt werden deutsche Frauen ihres leuchtenden, seidigen Blondhaares wegen bewundert und beneidet. Blond und deutsch — das ist ein Begriff. Es ist Pflicht jeder deutschen Blondine, sich die sprichwörtliche Schönheit ihres Blondhaares für immer zu bewahren, indem sie zur Pflege ihres blonden Haares regelmäßig Nurblond, das bekannte Spezial-Shampoo für naturblondes Haar benutzt. Nurblond verhindert nicht nur das Nachdunkeln naturblonden Haares, sondern gibt auch bereits nachgedunkeltem oder farblos gewordenem Blondhaar den ursprünglichen leichten Goldton zurück. Enthält keine Farbstoffe, keine Henna und ist frei von Soda und allen schädlichen Bestandteilen. Überall erhältlich. Versuchen Sie es noch heute.

ROBERTS jetzt  
**NUR·BLOND**  
Das Spezial-Shampoo für Blondinen



Figure 1. 1933 (Vol. 19) *Nur Blond* advertisement.

**NURBLOND hat mich  
schöner gemacht  
und jünger**



★ **NURBLOND gab meinem Blondhaar den lichten, hellen Goldton der Kinderjahre zurück.**

Natürlich helles, liches Blondhaar ist der schönste Schmuck jeder Frau. Nachgedunkeltes und matt gewordenes Blondhaar aber ist nicht nur unschön, sondern macht auch älter. NURBLOND — das Spezial-Shampoo für Blondinen — macht blondes Haar nicht nur um 2 bis 4 Schattierungen heller durch einfaches Waschen, sondern gibt auch nachgedunkeltem, matt und unansehnlich gewordenem Blondhaar den ursprünglichen lichten Goldton der Kinderjahre zurück auf natürlichem Wege. NURBLOND enthält keine Färbemittel, keine Henna und ist frei von Soda. Es ist ein rein seifenhaltiges Shampoo, aus hochwertiger, besonders edler Reinseife hergestellt. Es reinigt daher die Kopfhaut, ohne sie auszutrocknen und verhindert durch seine besondere Zusammensetzung Sprödigkeit und Schuppenbildung. Es macht das Haar weicher, duftiger und seidiger. Wenn Sie NURBLOND noch nicht kennen, dann versuchen Sie es noch heute. Sie erhalten Ihr Geld zurück, wenn Sie nicht zufrieden sind.

**Erst, wenn Sie  
NURBLOND  
kennen, wissen  
Sie, wie schön  
Ihr Blondhaar  
sein kann!**

**Nur NURBLOND  
FÜR BLONDINEN**

★ **NURBLOND hat sich in Deutschland und auf der ganzen Welt seit Jahrzehnten bewährt. Achten Sie daher auf den Namen NURBLOND und hüten Sie sich vor Verwechslung mit ähnlich klingenden und ähnlich angepriesenen Präparaten.**

12/II

Figure 2. 1939 (Vol. 12) *Nur Blond* advertisement.





**Figure 3. 1933 (Vol. 17) Nivea advertisement.**



**Figure 4. 1940 Nivea advertisement.**





Figure 5. 1925 (Vol. 13) cover of *die Gartenlaube*.





Figure 6. 1928 (Vol. 5) cover of *die Gartenlaube*.

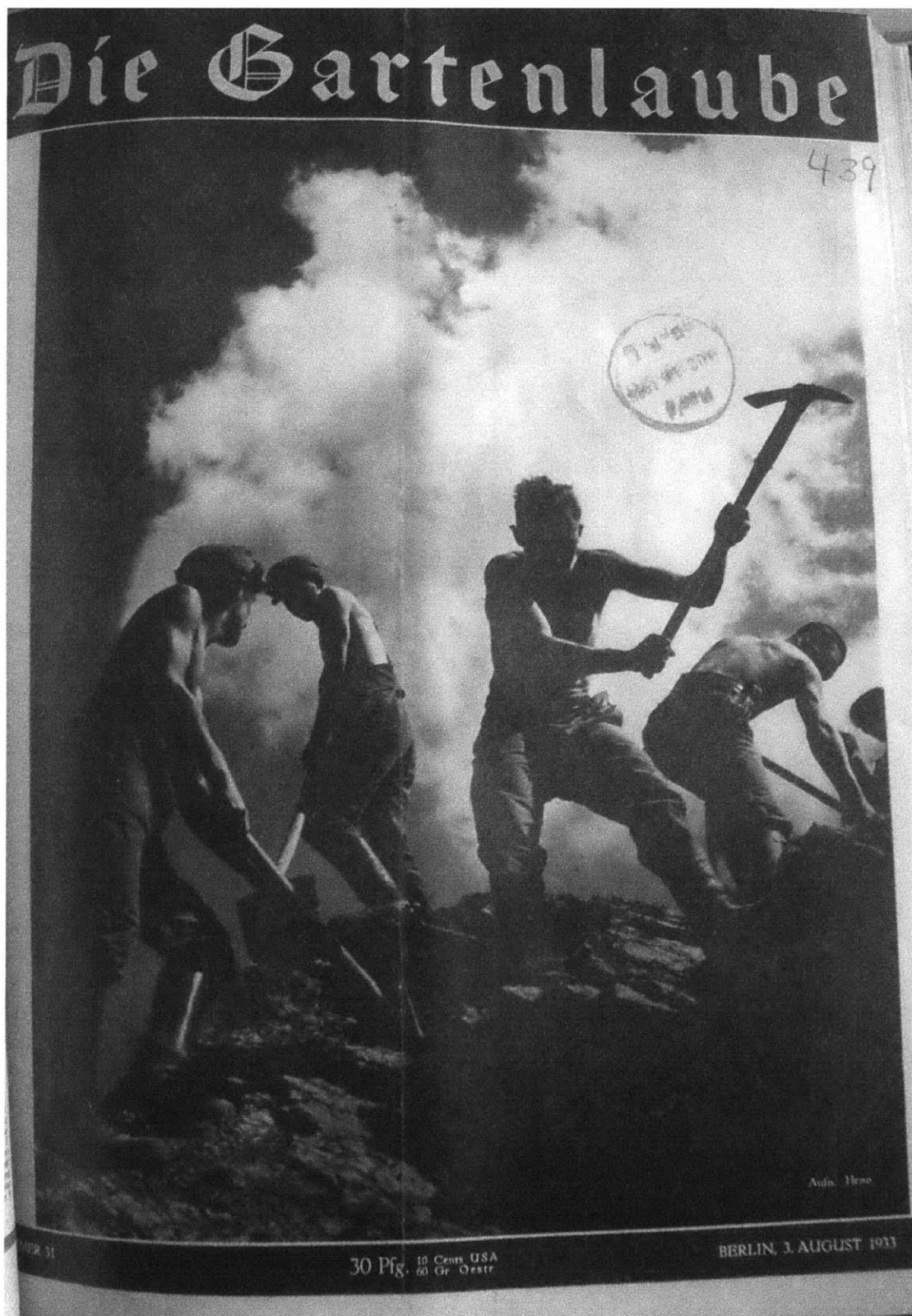


Figure 7. 1933 (Vol. 31) cover of *die Gartenlaube*.





Figure 8. 1933 (Vol. 11) cover of *die Gartenlaube*.





Figure 9. 1939 (May) cover of *die Gartenlaube*.





Figure 10. 1939 (Vol. 7) cover of *die Gartenlaube*.

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